Dear Jim,

rePost Mortem

3/4/75

Your cost estimates are optimistic for a number of reasons. When I last made inquiry, about 3 yrs ago, it was in the neighborhood of $15,000 for a 5,000 print.

That included the more expensive sewn binding. WWIV has a Perfect binding. Even the best of these can break. And we are talking about a book of over 600 pages, not 224. Either 608 or 640 pages and it could easily be larger with a better appendix. I have a fantastic appendix that will have to be cut heavily under any circumstances. If only 608 pages a skimpy appendix. Remember, this is three books in one. I regard an extensive appendix as both unreal and necessary, particularly necessary because of political developments since I completed the work. I have the repaged and partly-contracted master securely wrapped and placed in a secure place so I can't easily get the last page number. It is well over 500.

This is in a way a different kind of book. It is the kind that can be studied for years as a case study in the operations of commissions, for example. And there are many other such probabilities in college uses. So there are two means of deciding on the size of the appendix, assuming there is a little financial leaway. One is what is the minimum need for the credibility of the book itself. The other is what can be useful for years to come for others in other work and in this work. If these documents are not printed for all practical purposes they will be suppressed for future scholarship of any kind.

For all its liabilities, and I believe I am aware of about all, this is a remarkably definitive work. I am confident that it can really bust the whole thing wide open and will forever eliminate the frightful mouthings you have heard recently from Belin and Willens. Especially Specter. The book could have a separate Pennsylvania impact.

But you can learn costs better by calling Manny and giving him these page numbers: 608,624, 640. The first and last are more economical, full sigs (signatures of 32 pp). As him is a perfect binding can be depended upon for a book of this thickness. Close to 2" without a hardback.

I am willing to publish without a commercial version or contraction, condensation. My interest in a commercial version is separate and if you want I'll go into it separately. It would have to include publication by a house with good distribution and with the dedication to really push the book. Without this I'd oppose a condensation at this time. But no simplification can survive on its own. The stuff is so Byzantine it just would not be credited. But in the unabridged work it is overwhelming. Sylvia eve flipped ober the second part and Ed over all of it, as I wrote you recently, especially about the sustained sense of horror. However, with the backstopping of the unabridged edition, a simplification could not be summarily dismissed on simple disbelief. And more, what I thing this would be for - and to assure against corruption of- the current FBI investigations. The one advantage of the contraction is mass sales in commercial channels and I do NOT mean initial paperback. A regular hardback version. Or not any of this kind. Combined with the spectro suit the full work can really do the job. The new efforts of those merely whoring around regardless of how they kid themselves adds importance on the other side, protection against their being rebutted effectively.

You are wrong in saying I would say "no" to anything. I said "not" to Bud on WWIV about different things and for different reasons. He wanted me to countersign the note after I declined his offer to sigh for my borrowing. I would leave these kinds of details up to you and they would vary with the people involved. I think if a wealthy one were to do it there should be some consideration of the real cost all this represents to me and not an insistence upon full restitution from initial sales. You have a notion, too, of the amount of work I have to do on just sales and distribution and what this alone precludes in other work.

Bud is rich. I was not going to let him impose upon me or demean me in any way. However, you know the actualities from your own experience and our agreement. It was that my cash costs be recovered from the top. In fact, however, I have not taken a penny of these costs back and have applied 100% of the gross to your debt. I didn't even use what we did not give Manny for the envelopes, etc. I put that out personally. The difference is between your financial situation and Bud's and because it came at a time of the year we would have some income from Lil's only regular employment. This made it possible for me to reduce the burden on you. On you it would be a burden. On a Bud it would not be and I would

not be willing to live as I do and do without what is commonplace to most others for a Bud who wastes more than I dream of and is not hurt by it. Or an Arch Kimbrough.

There is another factor here you have not considered. How can I possibly promote the book if I have neither resources nor return, from the book? On WWIV I've not been able to make calls in promotion simply because I can't pay the phone tolls. I've not been able to travel, etc. There has to be a distinction made and understood between mere publication and a serious effort to get the book sold, which is how itsx contents get around. Where is the cost of this going to come from?

What this really gets to is the seriousness of purpose of anyone who could or would make publication possible and if it were a person of means if he'd want me to try and make out with no possibility of income for the period I'd be printing and promoting the book. At 62 this is a little different than at your age. I'm willing, however, to do as I have with WWIV on the chance that the book could accomplish its purposes under these rather harsh limitations. I consider it not impossible.

I guess the only answer I can give you is assurance that I'm flexible and that for all practical purposes you could make any deal you want except that I not put out any cash as I have with WWIV. I simply can't.

You ask are there any other conditions. On the unabridged work none. I can't and won't revise it and I will if necessary limit the appendix. The index is on cards for the full text. It would require adding of the appendix to the index and typing and a cover Sammy would do (in this case I'd hope being paid). If one assumes an appendix and an index and a cover are norms, then no preconditions except an economical first print, 5,000 or more copies. Otherwise all the costs per unit are too high.

There would be some conditions on a companion or later contraction. Here there are factors I believe would be strange to you. You know the problem with Ned. That would have to be assured against. But money here has different meaning. Unless a publisher makes a real cash investment in an book it is foolish to expect him to do what is needed in promotion and advertising and such a contraction is a loser. The publisher has to put enough up front to require him to make a real effort. I've been through this too much to regard it as other than a basic publishing truism. This means that a sizable advance is a minimum. But it is separate from independent publication of the full work. If they are to coincide, which at this moment has certain distinct disadvantages, then the publishing cost of the full edition is not enough for a real advance.

These considerations are so many and so outside your experience that we'd better talk about them.

Here you called and I'm stopping for some lunch and a break.

No, it is enough. On the fire extinguishers, I owe you for the xeroxing of the Leigh James book and I'll owe you for the second and for the Goulden book so let us just work it out that way. They were as I recall $12.25. It is I think $2.00 for the remaindered book and you've already paid for the first xeroxing.

Best,

bbc to JDW: could ypu consider condensing/popularizing if a deal could be made?